

Sea Isle City's Memorial Weekend More Civilized

By JOE HART

SEA ISLE CITY — Overall, Bob Lynch of Town Watch/Town Pride said, he and his group are pleased about the city's response to Memorial Day weekend this year.

The group was expected to discuss the weekend at a meeting last night at the community lodge with the Mayor Leonard Desiderio and Police Chief William Kennedy.

With minor exceptions, Lynch said government leaders, police, public works and business owners

made great strides over last year's performance.

"We're not aware of any major problems," he told this newspaper.

Memorial Day weekend 2006, however, was marked with heavy drinking starting early in the morning, loud parties, vandalism, rowdiness and little enforcement.

Last year 40 EMT calls were made, 80 percent alcohol related. There were also 67 noise complaints and no summonses issued.

"We are pleased that Mayor Desiderio reinstated

the noise squad this year," Lynch said regarding the police unit that focuses on public nuisance issues. "And the experienced officers on the squad were excellent."

This year the squad raided three troublesome houses, and issued 28 noise tickets, 17 at one house.

"That's much better than zero tickets last year," he said.

Lynch was a little disappointed, however, with the amount of trash in the downtown area, which he said appeared to come from local restaurants.

"Paper plates, drink cups and pizza boxes were everywhere," he noticed.

He said part of the prob-

lem was malfunctioning equipment, but mostly the large crowd of visitors was to blame.

"The city's cleanup crews were overwhelmed by the large crowd over the weekend," he said. "One thing we'll discuss at the meeting will be asking business owners to have employees police the areas outside their restaurants for trash."

Another thing Lynch frowned upon was the early start some local pubs had over the weekend.

"They opened at 10 a.m.," he noted. "That just invites trouble."

He admitted it was better than last year when some bars opened at 7 a.m.

He also complained of

"shock jocks" hired as entertainment for the weekend, suggesting they entice the mob to drink and act rowdy.

"We want to keep our image as a family friendly shore town," Lynch said. "That kind of act brings the wrong type of people to Sea Isle."

He thinks overall the weekend was a success and believes things will only get better with time.

"We're excited about the change of government and are hopeful things will improve even more next year," he added. "With the mayor and new business administrator coordinating the city's departments, things should run much smoother."